WHY VALLEY FORGE

Washington Showed Consummate Military Genius in Selecting Spot for Winter Quarters.

SAVED TRACT FROM ENEMY

British Possession of Philadelphia Made It Imperative That the American Army Should Be in Close Touch With the Soldiers of King George.

There is a letter of peculiar interest written by George Washington from Valley Forge in January, 1778. It was dictated to, and the body of the letter is in the handwriting of Alexander Hamilton. Sparks printed a portion of the letter, but thought it well to leave out the following portion, in which Washington gives his reasons for selecting Valley Forge as his winter headquarters:

"The enemy still remain in possession of Philadelphia and are secured by a strong chain of redoubt with intrenchments of communication from Schuylkill to Delaware. We are posted on the west side of the former about twenty miles from the city, and with pains and industry the troops are tolerably well covered in huts. We are to regret we are not more comfortably quartered, but circumstances would not admit of it. Had we retired to the towns in the interior part of the state a large tract of fertile country would have been

Washington at Valley Forge.

exposed to ravage and ruin and we should have distressed in a peculiar manner the virtuous citizens from Philadelphia who had fled thither for refuge."

So it will be seen that Washington was influenced in going to Valley Forge, not only by a desire to harrass and hold in check the enemy, but to save his fellow-citizens from privation and suffering. Well may he be called the good and great Washington. No man has had more difficult and more desperate situations to face and no public character in the history of our country has had, not only to frame plans for military and political crises, but to carry out those plans himself.

Original Name Was Washen.

Mr. Joseph I. Keefer developed some curious information on the ancestory of Gen. George Washington. In an address which he delivered before William Cushing camp, Sons of Veterans, at Washington, Mr. Keefer declared that President Washington's forefathers were not named Washington at all. Their name was plain Washen. In 1660 when John Washen, President Washington's great-grandfather, sailed from the north of England for the colonies and settled for a new life at a place called Pops, near Colonial Beach, he revised his plebian name of Washen for the more aristocratic Washington. Mr. Keefer gave a sketch of the deep researches which led him backward over the branches of the Washen family tree for more than 50 generations, until he located the original Washen at Cave Castle, England. He had many interesting pictures of historical subjects, which he displayed in connection with his lecture.

Washington.

A nation is not merely an aggregation of individuals, but a body of laws and institutions, welded into one organic, living entity. Writing and reading of history are beneficial only in so far as history establishes a school of morals.

The past is a vast field. The bad man as well as the good man finds in the future a limitless haven for his imagination, and hopes for fame and favor at the hands of generations to succeed him. The historian, looking back at years far fled, seeking to perceive clearly through obscurity the right relation of acts of individuals, of parties or of nations, is sometimes inclined to doubt the soundness of his own judgment in a future that harks back to a past so distant.

Snub Precedes Triumph.

After one of Gen. Washington's disastrous campaigns the ladies of Philadelphia declined to notice his wife, and administered the snub direct, which was in interesting contrast to their reception of her when next she entered Philadelphia as the wife of the president.

FIRST OF AMERICANS

Honor at Once Conferred by Washington's Countrymen Will Be Confirmed by History.

HIS HIGH RANK AS STATESMAN

Far-Seeing Mind Perceived the Future Needs of the Country He Had Done so Much to Create—Loved and Trusted as He Deserved.

Once more, what is it to be an American? Putting aside all the outer shows of dress and manners, social customs and physical peculiarities, is it not to believe in America and in the American people? Is it not to have an abiding and moving faith in the future and in the destiny of America? Something above and beyond the patriotism and love which every man whose soul is not dead within him feels for the land of his birth. Is it not to be national and not sectional; independent and not colonial? Is it not to have a higher conception of what this great new country should be, and to follow out that ideal with loyalty and truth? Has any man in our history fulfilled these conditions more perfectly and completely than George Washington? Has any man ever lived who served the American people more faithfully, or with a higher and truer conception of the destiny and possibilities of the country?

He was the first to rise above all colonial or state lines and grasp firmly the conception of a nation to be formed from the thirteen jarring colonies. The necessity of national action in the army was at once apparent to him, although not to others; but he carried the same broad views into widely distant fields where at the time they wholly escaped notice. It was Washington, oppressed by a thousand cares, who, in the early days of the Revolution, saw the need of federal courts for admiralty cases, and for other purposes. It was he who suggested this scheme, years before anyone even dreamed of the Constitution; and from the special committees of congress, formed for this object in accordance with this advice, came, in the process of time, the federal judiciary of the United States. Even in the early dawn of the Revolution, Washington had clear in his own mind the need of a continental system for war, diplomacy, finance and law, and he worked steadily to bring this policy to fulfillment.

There must have been something very impressive about a man, who with no pretensions to the art of the orator and with no touch of the charlatan, could so move and affect vast bodies of men by his presence alone. But the people, with the keen eye of affection, looked beyond the mere outward nobility of form. They saw the soldier who had given them victory, the great statesman who had led them out of confusion and faction to order and good government. Party newspapers might rave, but the instinct of the people was never at fault. They loved, trusted and well nigh worshiped Washington living and they have honored and reverenced him with an unchanging fidelity since his death.—Henry Cabot Lodge "The Real George Washington."

MARTHA WASHINGTON.

From an Old Portrait of the Wife of the Great President.

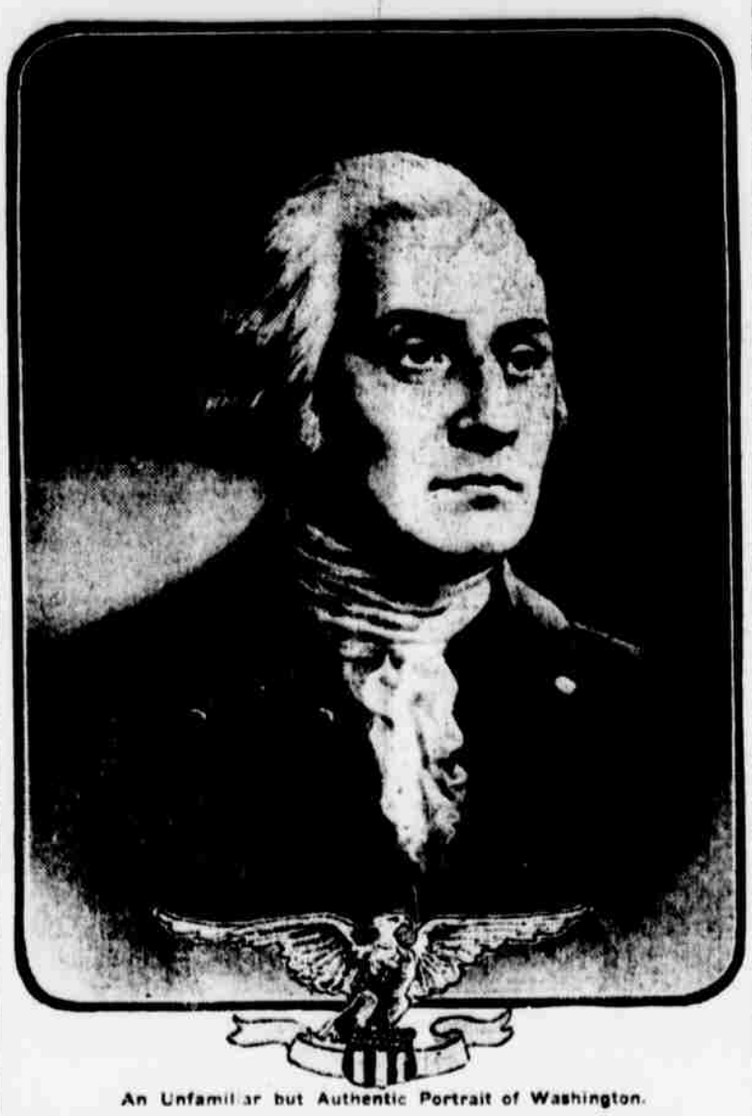
Washington's Records Public.

Few men have left so complete a record of their public lives as Washington. He began early to keep copies of all his important letters and after the outbreak of the revolution he was undoubtedly conscious that the circumstances of his career were such as to make a record of them, one which would be of interest to others than those of his own generation. This fact in itself must have acted as a restraint to the free expression of feelings in which lesser men may indulge themselves.

Worthy Wife of Hero.

Mrs. Washington, on one occasion, gave a striking illustration of her success in domestic manufacture by appearing in a dress of cotton striped with silk and entirely home made, the silk stripes in the fabric being woven from the ravellings of brown silk stockings and old crimson chair covers.

GEORGE WASHINGTON



An Unfamiliar but Authentic Portrait of Washington.

'Thank God!' the people's answer was just,
The one man equal to his trust,
Who, beyond fear, and without weakness good,
Calm in the strength of thankless rectitude!

His rule of order, justice, peace,
Made possible the world's release.
Taught princes and serf that power is but a trust,
And rule alone which serves the ruled is just.

—Whittier.

Washington the Truly Great Man

You must excuse me from uniting with you to honor the memory of your illustrious countryman, since I could not do so with sincerity, for Washington scorned a crown, and did more to bring royalty into contempt than all men who have ever lived.—Emperor Francis I. of Austria.

Until time shall be no more will a test of the progress which our race has made in wisdom and virtue be derived from the veneration paid to the immortal name of Washington.—Lord Brougham.

Again is here the anniversary of the birth of George Washington—a legal holiday from Porto Rico to the Philippines, and a notable day to the 160,000,000 who are carrying the English language around the globe, as well as to all civilized peoples.

Washington's place in history has long been fixed. If he is not the greatest man of all time it is not possible to name a greater. This is the judgment of civilization and has stood unchanged during the years since his death.

Nevertheless, history has done Washington a great wrong. Unable to find in him the imperfections of humanity, it cast aside his humanity and re-created him as an impersonal superman, as far removed from flesh and blood as are his marble statues.

This deification of Washington is a thing that we American must undo. Weighed in the balance as flesh and blood, he loses not one jot or tittle, but rather gains in greatness, while we gain a human Father of this Country. For George Washington, in spite of history, was as human as any son of Adam.

The proof that Washington was very human—a man of full blood and hot temper, sensitive, modest and doubtful of his capacity, fond of the good things of life as he saw them and reluctant to give them up even at the call of duty—is ready for the asking. It is in the writings of Washington himself—not so much in those state documents in which he was more or less on parade—as in the thousands of intimate pages of diaries and letters. Let the student once forget Washington the demigod, and Washington the man springs to life from these writings. And there is abundant corroboration—if it were needed—in the writings of his contemporaries.

Delving into Washington's papers in search of the real man, we come upon all sorts of little things that show him to have been very much like the rest of us in many ways. We have space for but these:

The supercilliousness of the British officer rasped the Colonial Washington to the quick. After the Great Meadows campaign he declined a nondescript command in these words: "If you think me capable of holding a commission that has neither rank nor emolument annexed to it you must entertain a very contemptible opinion of my weakness, and believe me to be more empty than the commission itself."

Washington liked good wine and his Madeira was famous. We find him aghast over the fact that fifty-six bottles of it had been served to casual visitors at Mount Vernon during his absence and writing to have it stopped at once. He says claret is good enough for people "who may incline to make a convenience of the house in traveling, or who may be induced to visit it from motives of curiosity."

Washington's dislike for slavery and his humanity to his slaves are beyond question. Nevertheless we find him writing: "And what sort of sickness is Betty Davis? A more lazy, deceitful, and impudent hussy is not to be found in the United States."

When Washington was elected president he wrote to Knox: "In confidence, I tell you * * * that my movement to the chair of government will be accompanied by feelings not unlike those of a culprit who is going to the place of his execution."

Washington kept his hot temper under iron control. He abhorred profanity. And here are two touches of nature that make us all akin: At Monmouth, finding the traitor Lee in retreat, he galloped up to him at full speed and swore at him "until the leaves shook on the trees * * * like an angel from heaven." In a cabinet meeting some one handed him a cartoon representing him as being publicly executed by the guillotine. Jefferson thus writes of the scene:

"The president was much inflamed, got into one of those passions when he cannot command himself, ran on to the personal abuse which had been bestowed on him, defied any man on earth to produce one single act of his since he had been in the government which was not done on the purest motives; that he had never repented but once having slipped the moment of resigning his office, and that was every moment since; that by God he would rather be in his grave than in his present situation."

Washington was no freak of genius, springing to life full-armed for the work to which he was called. He was a consistent continuance of the family pattern. He "increased in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man." He grew, just as we all grow.

The Washington who was so embarrassed by the thanks of the Virginia house of Burgesses that he could not speak, and thus called forth Speaker Robinson's immortal "Sit down, Mr. Washington; your modesty is equal to your valor, and that surpasses the power of any language that I possess," was a very different Washington from the Washington who awed the great of all the world.

Had Washington died before he became commander-in-chief he would be remembered merely as a gallant Colonial soldier and rich planter; if just after the surrender of Yorktown, as one of the great generals of the world; if after the Federal convention, as a political leader and great general. It requires his presidency to establish his statesmanship. And finally it took his retirement to private life to give the last touch to his patriotism and proclaim him

"First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

Washington's "Charmed Life."

The Indians said Washington bore a charmed life after he got four bullets through his coat and had two horses shot under him in a movement led by General Braddock against Fort Duquesne.

Showed His Wisdom Early.

George Washington was just twenty-one years old when Governor Dinwiddie sent him on a perilous journey to Ohio to find out the strength of the French, which he accomplished handily.

WORTHY OF BUILDER

George Washington Had, as Was Appropriate, the Finest House in the National Capital.

COST MUST HAVE BEEN GREAT

From Records It Seems That the First President Either Built or Had in Contemplation Other Habitations—British Respected the Mansion.

Records show that George Washington had in mind the building of another house, or other houses than his home on Capitol Hill. There is no available record to show how much money Washington expended upon his city mansion. The cost must have been considerable in those days of slow travel, when bricks were brought across the ocean in sailing vessels, and when experienced bricklayers were few and able to command very high wages.

Although only three stories in height, it was a very large and roomy house. Moreover, it was intended to be the best house in the Federal city, for Washington undoubtedly realized the fact that he was the foremost citizen of the new republic and one of the foremost men in the whole world.

Although now level with the street, it is known that the mansion originally stood upon a terrace, ascended by stone steps. The grounds were surrounded by a hedge fence, similar to the hedge which surrounds Mount Vernon estate. The mansion faces east and is parallel with the capitol building. Its front view was over a large level plateau which was bounded by the horizon-tipped hills of Maryland; a plateau upon which Washington expected the Federal city to be built. Washington, Jefferson, Carroll and others purchased substantially all of the best land on the plateau. But their heirs held the land at such speculative prices that homemakers sought the vicinity of the White House instead of the capitol, and the Federal city was builded on the west and northwest part of the city environments.

Admiral Wilkes purchased the mansion from the heirs of Washington, and used it as his residence during his lifetime. His heirs sold it to John Talty, an Irish-American tavern-keeper. Talty rented it to numerous prominent society folks, always receiving a high rental for it from them. About forty years ago Talty sold it to a man named Hillman, who used it for a hotel, and it was locally known as "The Hillman House." That owner died, and the residence was sold and resold a number of times, being used the greater part of the time as a boarding house.

When the British soldiers captured the Federal city, in 1814, and ravaged it savagely, they so respected the Washington mansion that they did not injure it, nor even invade it.

VALLEY FORGE

The place has been but little changed. The house in which Washington made his headquarters is preserved, and some of the intrenchments made by the patriots can be traced today. Over a thousand acres have been taken by Pennsylvania for park purposes.

Americans True to Their Ideal.

For more than a century the American people, who are credited by the world as being a money making and loving people, making wealth the essential of rank, and being deplorably destitute of sentiment, have presented to the world an object lesson of fidelity to a lofty ideal in the respect paid to the memory of George Washington. And there is none to assert that this enthusiasm is due to a romantic exaggeration of his countrymen and countrywomen. The searchlight has been turned on his every deed, and summing it all up the verdict has been that he was faithful, wise, pure, unsullied by ambition and unspoiled by adulation.

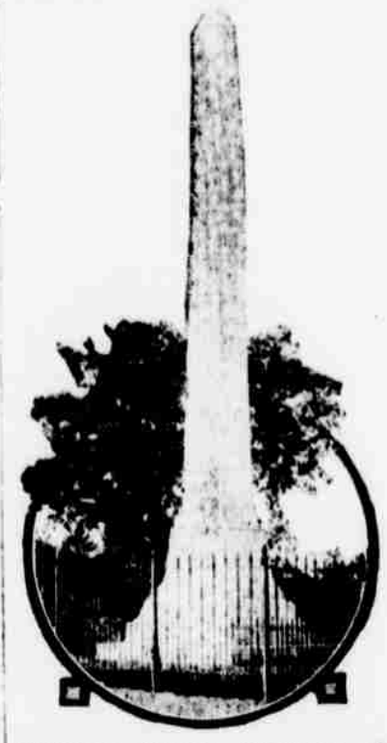
SPOT LITTLE KNOWN

Birthplace of Washington Seems Strangely Forgotten by the Average American.

NOT FAR FROM MOUNT VERNON

Wakefield Plantation, Though Isolated, Is Well Worth a Visit—Monument Erected by National Government on Ground Where House Stood.

It will doubtless come as something of a surprise to most readers, and possibly as something of a shock, to learn that one of the most historic localities connected with the career of the foremost American should be today almost wholly neglected by his countrymen. This notable object of neglect in this age of patriotic shrines is none other than the birthplace of George Washington at Wakefield plantation, on the Virginia shore of the Lower Potomac river. It is not that this significant spot is unmarked—a grateful nation has seen to it that no place associated with George Washington is devoid of monument or commemorative tablet—but that it is seemingly wholly unknown to those countless thousands of patriotic pilgrims who delight to do homage to Washington by visits to localities rendered conspicuous through his career.



Monument Marking Birthplace of George Washington.

The neglect of Wakefield, where the Father of His Country first opened his eyes upon the world, is all the more strange when it is pointed out that it is located less than half day's journey by steamer from Mount Vernon—that preeminent mecca for the American tourist and for foreign visitors which is visited each year by thousands upon thousands of sightseers. The people who visit the Old Dominion primarily to see Mount Vernon never think of returning home without a peep at the quaint town of Alexandria, where Washington attended church and engaged in other public activities, and not a few of them also make journeys to various historic mansions which the first president designed or built, as, for instance, the mansion which he built for his beloved Nelly Custis, but seemingly the touring throng has quite overlooked the fact that the savior of his country had a birthplace.

The odd thing about the present-day neglect of Wakefield plantation is that the old farm was visited by vastly greater numbers of people a few years ago than it has been more recently. The secret of the whole thing is that Washington's birthplace is very isolated. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a more out-of-the-way nook in the eastern part of the United States. No railroad approaches within many miles of it, and the only means of access is found in the steamers plying up and down the Potomac river. In days gone by these river craft carried many interested persons to Wakefield. The United States government built a pier at the plantation, and steamers were enabled to land passengers almost at the site of the manor house in which Washington was born.

As has been said, the historic spot at Wakefield has not been left unmarked, although isolated and neglected insofar as the tide of twentieth-century tourist travel is concerned. It was in 1895 that the national government erected at Wakefield a copy of facsimile in reduced size of the Washington national monument at the national capital. The unadorned shaft, which is somewhat similar (though larger) to the one at Yorktown marking the spot where Lord Cornwallis surrendered to the commander-in-chief of the Continental army, is visible for some distance on the Potomac river, but cannot be seen from the decks of the regular river steamers by reason of the fact that the navigable channel is several miles distant.

The monument bears the inscription: "Washington's Birthplace," and in smaller letters at the base are the words "Erected by the United States, A. D. 1895."